

Did You Know? - Valentine's & President's Day

*Help my heart continually beat with love for You and others.
Thank you for this day when we celebrate love and for showing us
what that word really means.*

Amen

Valentine's Day

Every year, the fourteenth day of the month of February has millions across the world presenting their loved ones with candy, flowers, chocolates and other lovely gifts. In many countries, restaurants and eateries are seen to be filled with couples who are eager to celebrate their relationship and the joy of their togetherness through delicious cuisines. There hardly seems to be a young man or woman who is not keen to make the most of the day. But who is this mysterious saint, and where did these traditions come from?



"Be My Valentine"

- Seien Sie Mein Valentine – German
- Sea Mi Valentine – Spanish
- Soyez Mon Valentine – French
- Sia Il Mio Valentine – Italian
- Seja Meu Valentine – Portuguese

"I love you"

- Eu te amo – Portuguese
- Ti amo – Italian
- Je t'aime – French
- Te amo – Spanish
- Ikh Hob Dikh Lib – Yiddish
- Khao Raak Thoe – Thai
- Mahn doostaht doh-rahm - Iranian

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

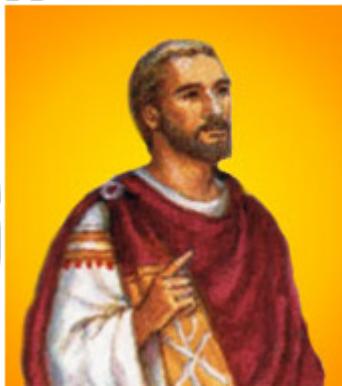
It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

*It always protects, always trusts,
always hopes, always perseveres.*

I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 NIV

The history of Valentine's Day is obscure, and further clouded by various fanciful legends. The holiday's roots are in the ancient Roman festival of Lupercalia, a fertility celebration commemorated annually on February 15. Pope Gelasius I recast this pagan festival as a Christian feast day circa 496, declaring February 14 to be St. Valentine's Day. (In 1969, the Catholic Church revised its liturgical calendar, removing the feast days of saints whose historical origins were questionable. St. Valentine was one of the casualties.)



Which St. Valentine this early pope intended to honor remains a mystery: according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, there were at least three early Christian saints by that name. One was a priest in Rome, another a bishop in Terni, and of a third St. Valentine almost nothing is known except that he met his end in Africa. Rather astonishingly, all three Valentines were said to have been martyred on Feb. 14.

Some experts state that it originated from St. Valentine, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. (In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honour Juno. Juno was the Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the Goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.) He died on February 14, 269 A.D., the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine". Other aspects of the story say that Saint Valentine served as a priest at the temple during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Claudius then had Valentine jailed for defying him. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honor St. Valentine.

Another variation on this festival goes like this: Two Roman youths (who were blessed by their priest) would run through the streets swinging a goatskin thong called a Februa. The Latin word is Februatio, (the act of lashing with sacred thongs) and was believed to be for purification. From this word comes our word "February". And the belief is that if a woman was touched by this thong, she would be able to bear children better. Thus again, we go back to a similarity with fertility? According to the legend, they did this to honor their God Faunus, the god of crops. (Similar to the Greek God, Pan.)

February might not be considered spring for many of us today, especially in certain areas of the US where there is still snow on the ground. But for the Romans this Lupercalia on the 14 and the Valentine's Day on the 15th got blended into one day (on the 14th because the young men and women couldn't wait any longer to get together?) and occurred 7 weeks after the Winter Solstice, marking the progression from Winter into Spring. In the Middle Ages it was felt that birds chose their mates on February 14. So February 14th has been considered the official mating day for centuries.

Another theory about Valentine's Day doesn't begin with the Romans but with Norse. The Normans had a St. Galantin, which meant "lover of women." Now the "G" is not pronounced like a "Gah" in the English language. It is pronounced like a "V" and so the word is like "Valantin" in sound. And so they believe that their St. Galantin's Day is part of the confusion over St. Valentine's Day today.

And yet the French want to say that the word Valentine comes from their word "galantine" which means a lover or gallant.

The Roman Catholic Church did their best to try to ban this pagan fertility/mating festival. However, it remained popular in the hearts of the people and so they finally decided that it was hopeless to get rid of it. Thus they decided to redefine it as a Christian Saint Day of St. Valentine as I mentioned above. And so in 1660 Charles II officially restored Valentine's Day into England's society. And it is due to this that Great Britain is the country who is given credit for starting the printing of greeting cards, especially those expressing love, admiration, infatuation and other emotions.

St. Valentine's Day did not come to America until 1629 with the Puritans and even here went against some of the church elders. But love prevails, whether openly or publically and the church could not hold back love and passion even in the New World. About 100 years passed before the first Valentine Cards appeared in the United States.

Margery Brews (England) wrote the oldest known valentine in letter form dated 1477, sent to John Paston. For Valentine once meant "sweetheart" it grew to represent "message of love."

On 2-14-1667, Samuel Pepys in his diary described a kind of valentine that he got from his wife. It was a sheet of blue paper in which her name was written in gold letters. This became the forerunner of later valentines. But the custom didn't grow quickly. It took 100 years before it was common to leave a valentine love letter at the doorstep of your sweetheart.

Although the Catholic church was not thrilled with Valentines per se, the custom slowly began to grow also in Catholic countries. Surprisingly, the Valentines were made by the nuns, appearing really lacy and decorated with hand-painted flowers with the center not cupid but often a saint or a sacred religious-styled heart.

Germany is credited with providing the expensive paper and elaborate borders to Valentines in the 18th century. But they were not given on Valentines, but more often on New Year's Day or on a person's birthday. So the fancy German paper was imported to England and they used it for Valentines. But this paper was expensive and soon the English began to make it themselves.

Valentines did not always appear as hearts as we know them today. Most were known as "paper pockets" and were more like envelopes and folded over. The mailing folded and sealed with wax and expensive too.

Traditions of Valentine's Day

In Rome on the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often, they would fall in love and would later marry.

Originally the word Valentine meant the person whose name was picked from a box to be chosen as your sweetheart up until the 1500's. Then around 1533, it meant the folded piece of paper with the sweetheart's name on it. By 1610 it then became the gift given to this special someone and by 1824 it then became a poem, letter or verse to a sweetheart.

Hundreds of years ago in England, many children dressed up as adults on Valentine's Day. They went singing from home to home. One verse they sang was:

*Good morning to you, valentine;
Curl your locks as I do mine ---
Two before and three behind.
Good morning to you, valentine.*

In Wales wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on February 14th. Hearts, keys and keyholes were favourite decorations on the spoons. The decoration meant, "You unlock my heart!"

In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would wear these names on their sleeves for one week. To wear your heart on your sleeve now means that it is easy for other people to know how you are feeling.



In some countries, a young woman may receive a gift of clothing from a young man. If she keeps the gift, it means she will marry him.

Some people used to believe that if a woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a millionaire.

A love seat is a wide chair. It was first made to seat one woman and her wide dress. Later, the love seat or courting seat had two sections, often in an S-shape. In this way, a couple could sit together -- but not too closely!

Think of five or six names of boys or girls you might marry, As you twist the stem of an apple, recite the names until the stem comes off. You will marry the person whose name you were saying when the stem fell off.

Pick a dandelion that has gone to seed. Take a deep breath and blow the seeds into the wind. Count the seeds that remain on the stem. That is the number of children you will have.

If you cut an apple in half and count how many seeds are inside, you will also know how many children you will have.

Gradually, February 14 became the date for exchanging love messages and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. The date was marked by sending poems and simple gifts such as flowers. There was often a social gathering or a ball.



By the 18th century, gift-giving and exchanging hand-made cards on Valentine's Day had become common in England. Hand-made valentine cards made of lace, ribbons, and featuring cupids and hearts eventually spread to the American colonies.

The tradition of Valentine's cards did not become widespread in the United States, however, until the 1850s, when Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke graduate and native of Worcester, Mass., began mass-producing them.

So, how does Cupid, Hearts, Arrows, etc. all fit in?



Cupid is the son of Venus, the Roman Goddess of Love and the most popular symbol for Valentine's Day. Originally he was shown as a young man with a bow and arrows. But over the years, Cupid went from a handsome man to a pudgy baby? The reason is that the Romans had Cupid as the son of Venus (Goddess of Love and Beauty) and a symbol for passion, playful and tender love. His arrows were invisible and his victims (which could also include other Gods btw as well as humans) would not be aware that they were shot until they fell in love. But, the Victorian era wanted to help make Valentine's Day more proper for women and children. So they tossed out this handsome Roman Adonis guy and made Cupid more of a chubby baby.



The Colors of Valentine's Day are

Pink, Red and White for most cards and decorations, but is also on other Valentine commercial items like clothing, stuffed animals, candles, etc.

Red symbolizes warmth and feeling. It is associated with the color of the human heart.

White is a symbol of purity. (In some cases also of Faith and so it means the faith of the love two people have for each other.)

And so Pink (combination of Red + White) is then a symbol as I understand it of innocence or virginity in some cases.

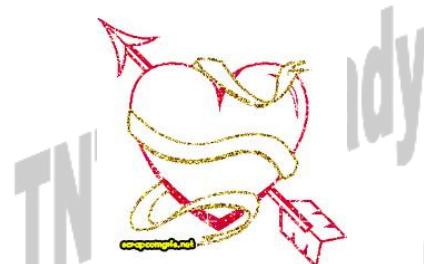


Hearts and Arrows



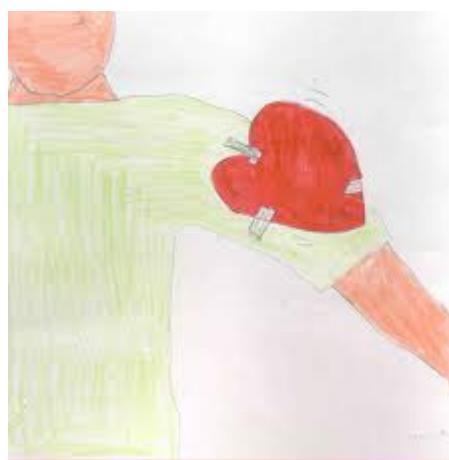
A heart (red or pink) with an arrow piercing through it is the most common shape and look for a Valentines, and even candles, candies, cookies, cakes, figurines, stuffed images, etc. The heart is a symbol both of love and also vulnerability.

When you send someone a Valentine, you take a risk of being rejected and your feelings hurt. So a piercing arrow is a symbol of death and the vulnerability of love. On the other hand, the heart and arrow also symbolize the merging of the male and female as one.



In the 12th century, physicians believed that the heart was the seat of love and affection in the human body. But the actual biological shape of the human heart does not look like the heart as we see it today. Legend has it that the Valentine heart-shape as we know it today was done by a doodler to represent the human female buttocks or a female torso with well-endowed breasts or the imprint of lips (wearing lipstick) made upon a piece of paper. So I guess it is just how you want to spin the story.

Wearing Your Heart on Your Sleeve?



This expression comes from the early 1800's where young American and British men wore slips of paper pinned to their sleeves with their girlfriend's name written on. They did this for several days and so it started the expression "wearing one's heart on one's sleeve."



Today the American Heart Association in the US has a "Save a Sweet Heart" anti-smoking campaign during Valentine's Week to help educate school kids against smoking.

Lovebirds



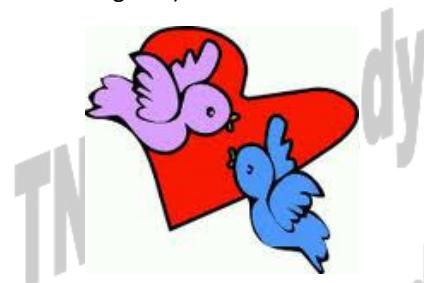
It was believed that birds chose their mates on February 14. And so the dove was chosen to be the bird representative because it was sacred to the Roman Goddess Venus because it chose a lifelong mate. They also make a cooing sound, which further proved they were the love couple. The dove was also a sacred bird to the Goddess, Venus (and other Love Deities).

And Noah had considered the dove to be his messenger. In the Song of Solomon, the word "Turtle" is really referring to the "turtledove." The turtledove is common in Asia and Europe, but it is not found in North America at all.

Since all doves are part of the pigeon family, they mate for life and the male and female both share in the caring of their young. Their cooing sounds are often considered "love sounds" and today it is often said that when people in love talk rather sugary and baby-like it is "cooing" with each other.



Dove superstitions are that they were magical and were often used to divine the future. The heart of a dove was often an ingredient in love potions. If you saw a white dove fly overhead it was suppose to be good luck. If you dreamt of a dove it was a sign that you had a promise of happiness. And, if you saw the first dove in springtime, made a wish, that wish would come true (much like wishing upon a falling star).



But through the years, love birds have changed from Doves to hummingbirds to birds of parades. Today, love birds depicted on Valentines are tiny parrots brilliant in color because genetically they really are in the parrot family. They often act like young lovers also. They are known for living in pairs and keeping to themselves, much like young lovers want their privacy today. As pets they are considered loveable, easy to tame and respond to affection. Some can even be taught to speak.



The bad side of lovebirds is that they can carry a disease harmful to humans so today there are strict rules regarding importing them into the United States.

Chaucer's Love Birds

It was not until the 14th century that this Christian feast day became definitively associated with love. According to UCLA medieval scholar Henry Ansgar Kelly, author of Chaucer and the Cult of Saint Valentine, it was Chaucer who first linked St. Valentine's Day with romance.

In 1381, Chaucer composed a poem in honor of the engagement between England's Richard II and Anne of Bohemia. As was the poetic tradition, Chaucer associated the occasion with a feast day. In "The Parliament of Fowls," the royal engagement, the mating season of birds, and St. Valentine's Day are linked:

**For this was on St. Valentine's Day,
When every fowl cometh there to choose his mate.**

Valentine Cards



The custom of exchanging love notes goes back to the Roman Lupercalia festival with the names being drawn. But the British were the ones who popularized sending your feelings to someone via a printed card. The first Valentine card was created by Charles, Duke of Orleans, imprisoned in the tower of London for several years following the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. He sent Valentine poems to his wife in France from his jail cell.

Commercial Valentines didn't appear until 1800 (In England) and although handmade cards had been around for years. In the 19th century a new kind of Valentine emerged called "penny dreadfuls" that were insulting and cruel rather than loving and flattering. They were mostly sent anonymously too.



In America, hand-made Valentines appeared around 1740 and were sealed with red wax and left secretly on a lover's doorstep (or sent in the mail). Commercial cards for the most part took over around 1880's. But people still (and will always) make homemade ones too. Some included trinkets, some locks of hair and in some cases there were checks that were drawn against "The Bank of Love" and valentines printed to look like money. One was so realistic to a 5 pound note it was quickly recalled!



Valentine verses were romantic, whimsical and critical. Postage was expensive so during the English Victorian times the custom was that the recipient paid for the mail they got (not the sender as we do it today). So you can imagine what a double insult it was to pay for a Valentine only to open it up and discover it is critical aka "Vinegar Valentine."



Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway were famous children's book illustrators of their time. At the age of 22, Kate sold her first Valentine design for \$15. Within weeks, over 25,000 copies were sold. For a few years after, she kept designing Valentines, but was never paid a penny more. Today, Kate Greenaway Valentine's are considered collectable items, as well as those designed by Walter Crane.

When Valentine Cards got to America, they also got more creative. The first known to come to the US is a note written by John Winthrop in 1629 to his wife before leaving England for the New World. It ended with "*My sweet wife, Thou must be my valentine for none hath challenged me.*" He later became governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony.



Valentines were not only done in delicate pen and ink, but also watercolor and the handwriting also became a thing of beauty for the card as well, as good penmanship was considered a form of art, as well as the quality of a person.

Acrostic Valentines - had verses in which the first letter of the lines spelled out the loved one's name.

Example of the name Amanda.

A - Another moment without you is
M - more pain than I can bear.
A- And no other love will ever be
N - nearer to my heart than yours.
D - Days pass slowly until we shall meet
A -again and our lives forever share.

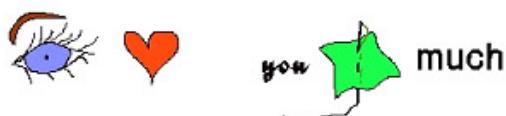
Cutout Valentines (which most children do in school today also) were simply made by folding paper several times and then cutting out small areas to make lacelike designs.



Pinprick Valentines were made by pricking tiny paper holes with a pin or needle into the paper into a lovely design.

Theorem or Poonah Valentines had designs that were painted through a stencil cut in oil paper (style originated in the Orient) with a coat of gum arabic to keep the paint from running.

Rebus Valentines had verses in which tiny pictures took the place of some of the words.

Example**Rebus Valentine by Brownielocks**

(I love you so much)

Puzzle Valentines - Had a puzzle to read and refold, in which scattered among their many folds were verses that had to be read in a certain order. I remember making these in school in which they ended up like a pyramid in which you put your index finger and thumb of both hands on both sides and moved the puzzle valentine North to South and East To West chanting some silly rhyme until you stopped and could chose a flap to open and read.



Fraktur Valentines - had ornamental lettering in the style of illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages.

Valentines did not always come via paper and lace.



Many sailors would return from their voyages bringing silk scarves (or other items) to their wives or girlfriends that had designs of hearts, flowers and other romantic images or words. And, in return many of the wives or girlfriends of those sailors (before they took off to sea) made them stronger bundles decorated with loving images and thoughts (and filled with items) to take with them on their voyages to think of them.

And during the Civil War some of the Valentines were more like paper dolls that were actually dressed with cloth (or paper) to try to resemble the person sending it.

And during the Roaring Twenties, some valentines were actually shaped like tomatoes. At that time, tomatoes only grew in flower gardens and were considered "love apples."

Flowers

Flowers were considered love tokens before there even was a St. Valentines. The Roman God, Bacchus (God of Wine and Joy) and Venus (Goddess of Love and Beauty) both considered the beauty and fragrance of flowers to be tied with romance and love.

Roses



Since the time of Solomon, the primary flower linked to romance was always the rose. Cleopatra of Egypt covered the floor with roses before receiving Mark Anthony.

A Roman myth is that Cupid was carrying a vase of sweet nectar to the gods on Mt. Olympus and spilled it on the ground. From that spot of spilled nectar, roses grew!

If roses are so symbolic of romance and love, then why the thorns? Well, another story goes like this:

The soft west wind named Sephyr one day opened a lovely rose and Cupid bent over to kiss the elegant petals. When he did, he was stung by an irate bee hiding inside. Venus got so angry she told Cupid to shoot some bees and string them up on one of his arrows. She then planted this string of dead bees on the rose stems, and the stings became the rose's thorns and ever since roses had thorns.

The ancient Romans also believed that anything discussed under a rose was considered sub rosa and to be kept secret. Today the Latin term is still used today to express something that is to be kept confidential.

Another Roman theory is that the Rose reminded the Roman Catholic Church of watching Christians devoured by lions. Later on, the Virgin Mary was called "The Rose of Heaven."

Daisy



The Romans believed that the daisy was once a wood nymph. One day, while dancing in a field she was seen by Vertumnus, the God of Spring (who fell in love with her of course). But when he reached for her she got frightened. So, out of pity the other gods let her sink into the earth and she became a daisy.

I could not find out how the game of holding a daisy and plucking off its petals saying "He loves me" or "He loves me not" got started before this posting.

Violets



The legend goes ... one day it is said that Venus got jealous of a group of beautiful maidens. And when Cupid refused to say that his mother's beauty was better than theirs, Venus go furious, so she beat her rivals (these maidens) until they were blue and she watched them shrink into violets.

Cornflower or Kyanus



In the Science of Botany, the cornflower is known as Kyanus, named after a Greek youth who was born in a field one day, making garlands of the blue blossoms for the altar of Flora, Goddess of Flowers. He died, unfortunately, leaving some of the garlands undone and so this touched Flora's heart and so in his honor she named the flowers after him.



Cornflower/Bachelor's Button



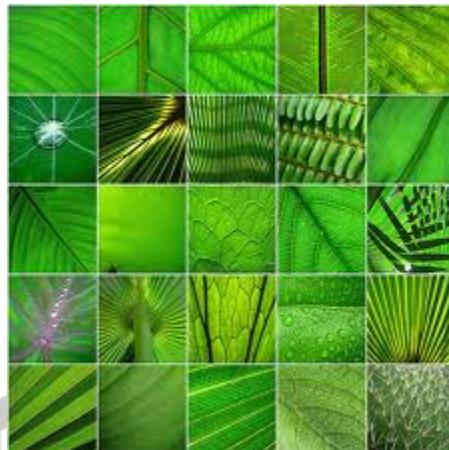
The name "bachelor's button" derives from legends of young men who would wear the flowers after falling in love. If the flower withered quickly, it was interpreted as a sign that they would not be loved in return.

What to say and with what flower?

Here are some traditional meanings for some other flowers often sent for Valentine's Day or other touching moments:

- Bleeding Heart = Hopeless, but not heartless.

- Gardenia = I love you secretly.
- Gladiolus = You pierce my heart.
- Lily-of-the-Valley = Let us make up.
- Rose - I love you passionately.
- Sweet William = You are gallant, suave and perfect.
- Violet = I return your love.



Green leaves represented hope in a love affair. (Often rumored to be the reason why British girls sprinkled bay leaves with rose water and put them on their pillows on Valentine's Day Eve. They wanted to see their loved one in their dreams.)

Endearments

When people are in love they just seem to automatically develop this type of dialogue. How so? We often refer to someone we care about as sweetheart or honey.

Researchers have found that when we fall in love, a chemical called phenylethylamine or phenylalanine is produced. This drug is responsible for that erratic, psychotic love high that we all feel.

When phenylethylamine or phenylalanine is flowing through our veins it's as if we are on amphetamines. We can stay up all night and work all day the next day. And a pheromone called androstenol is also released, which heightens our sexual attractions. Thus, we also end up producing what is called a sweet taste in our mouths and we start spouting off phrases like "luscious" and "sweet" and "honey" and other things that we like such as "muffin" or "cupcake" or "pudding."

However, there is nothing as bad as love gone wrong! And so then we suddenly start spouting off words that have to do with being disgusted, depressed, angry, bitter etc. These are like, "a sour taste in my mouth" or "foul mood" or even being a little "stinker."

Cute Love Nicknames

Amore (Italian for Love)

Angel

Angel of love

Babe

Babushka

Baby

Baby doll

Baccha (Hindi for Baby for Male)

Bacchi (Hindi for Baby for

Female)	Dumpling	Pumpkin pie
Beautiful	Gorgeous	Romeo
Bellissimo (Italian for Handsome)	Handsome	Rosey
Bombshell	Honey	Sexy
Bunny rabbit	Honey bunny	Smiley
Buttercup	Hot sexy mama	Sugar
Butterscotch	Hubby	Sugar lips
Chick	Hun (short for Honey)	Sunshine
Cinderella	Hunk	Sweet cheeks
Coochie coo	Jaan (Hindi for Life)	Sweet chops
Cupcake	Lady love	Sweetheart
Cutie	Love	Sweetie
Cutie pie	Lovely	Sweetie pie
Darling	Lover boy	Tarzan
Dear	My love	Tiger
Doll	Pooh bear	Twinkle toes
Doll face	Prince Charming	
	Princess	

Apples



Historically, apples have been tokens of love and fertility. The Norse gods ate apples to stay young and scholars say that Hebrew women drank and washed with the sap of an apple for fertility. Apples have also been known for divining and fortune-telling since ancient times. So the phrase, "Mom, Country and Apple Pie" all refer to types of love....maternal, patriotism and sexual.

Yet apples are NOT really the original aphrodisiac at all. The Spaniards believed that the tomato (nightshade vegetation) to really be the true romance-inducing fruit and brought the seeds over to the US from South America. So "love apples" are not really apples at all, but tomatoes. And this is how we get the phrase, "She's a really hot tomato!"

Chocolate



Believe it or not, chocolate contains the same chemical mentioned above called phenylethylamine or phenylaline that is produced in our brains when falling in love and that gives the same emotional high related to amphetamines. Many psychologist feel that chocolate is an instant "love booster" and an automatic sweet taste in our mouths. To some people, both chocolate and love can be addictive.

The idea of giving chocolate to someone we care about is a way to stir up the same emotions in them (only artificially if they don't really feel the same way emotionally back) as well.

As with all drugs, the phenylethylamine will wear off if it's not produced due to real emotions.

Some also say that "sweets for my sweet" is a pun for giving any candy to someone you care about.

Love Knots

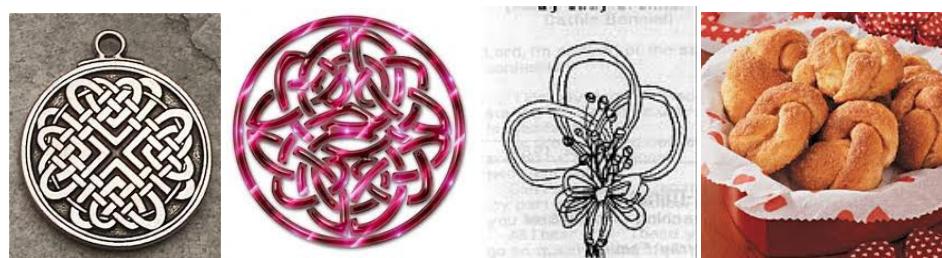


It has no beginning and no end and consists of graceful loops (sometimes forming hearts) in which messages of love are either attached and knotted in (or written on the ribbon or rope) and read by turning the knot around and around. And, if you couldn't make a real love knot, then many Valentines included a design of one.



A young man often hung this love knot on his true love's doorknob, slipping a letter under also.

History is not clear on who this all started - Some feel this began with the sailors since many were skilled at making fishnets and so doing knots or macramé were their skill. Others say it is a Celtic custom and design. While others say it is Scandinavian.



Paper Hands

By the 19th Century another symbol of love became the paper hand.



It was considered a symbol of courtship because of the custom of a man "asking for a lady's hand" in marriage. And eventually tiny paper gloves became a valentine card symbol as well. Which evolved into gloves (esp. silk) becoming a popular gift to for a man to give his sweetheart. Eventually, a woman sort of expected a pair of good gloves as a gift (in she was in certain social circles). As time passed a man would also give shoestrings, silk stockings, garters and jewelry to his sweetheart for Valentines.



Scrimshaw & Cameos

Now, back to those romantic sailors longing for their true loves while at sea....



Many sailors would scratch designs on tusk, bones, ivory or wood as a token of love. This is known as scrimshaw today. Long flat decorated scrimshaw were often meant as corset stiffeners known as busks and stays. Some carved messages into them.

It is also rumored that talented sailors would often carve images of their fair ladies on conch shells (known as cameos) because photos were not invented yet. In some cases they carved images of themselves on conch shells to leave with their true loves to remember them by (had them mounted as pins).



The male cameos are more rare than the female ones. In other cases, the men would carve pictures of Gods on the cameos or scrimshaw and give it to their loved one as an omelet of love and protection for them.

Here is a poem written from a sailor to his sweetheart when he sent her a carved scrimshaw whalebone busk.

**Accept, dear girl, this busk from me
 Carved by my humble hand.
 I took it from a sperm whale's jaw
 One thousand miles from land.
 In many a gale had been the whale
 In which this bone did rest.
 His time is past, but his bone at last
 Must now support thy breast.**

Today, if a man gave a woman say a Victoria's Secret bra or lingerie, it would not be considered that intimate as in the Victorian times when a man literally carved the support bones for his woman's corsets!

Valentine Lace



Expensive Valentines today have real lace, perhaps gold charms, real flowers (or dried) and even made with red velvet and not paper. For thousands of years, certain "pretty things" have often been associated with romance.

In the days of yore, knights often rode into battle with his lady love's scarf or ribbon tied somewhere on him. Lace, because of its delicate nature, has come to represent something lovely to look at and thus represent love (because lace really isn't practical as far as a fabric).

So lace as long as 400 years ago because a popular trimming for clothing, especially clothing associated with love like wedding dresses!



How lace paper got made was purely accidental. Joseph Addenbrooke in 1834 was working for a London paper when by accident a file brushed over a sheet of paper embossed with a raised design.

The high points of this embossed design thus got filed off leaving small holes and giving a lacy look to the paper.

This led into the business of making paper laces and soon others followed, so competitively to the point where some of these paper laces are of museum quality today.

Valentine Phobias

Although most of us who are not in love, married or seeing someone, dread Valentine's Day for its reminder of loneliness, we only face a slight sense of depression and nothing more. For some people with certain phobias, the following can be a problem for them:

Orintho-Apiphobia - Fear of the Birds and Bees

Ereuthophobia - Fear of Blushing

Obligaphobia - Fear of Commitment

Anlophobia - Fear of Flowers

Dorapophobia - Fear of Furs
Zelophobia - Fear of Jealousy
Amoraphobia - Fear of Love
Gamophobia - Fear of Marriage
Arotophobia - Fear of Physical Love
Hedonophobia - Fear of any kind of Pleasure or Having Fun
Haphephobia - Fear of Touching or Being Touched
Gynophobia - Fear of Girls
Androphobia - Fear of Men

So what do these have to do with Valentine's Day exactly? Well for some people, they really fear any kind of "potential" social interaction with the opposite sex, or what in their minds might be perceived as a potential. If a guy perhaps is afraid of being hugged by a female, he might dread Valentine's Day for this. It might never happen, but he worries about "what if" all day long. The same can be true for a female. Or it might be that they fear their own reactions if they get a Valentine, such as blushing. So they don't want one given to them publically.

For most of us, this sounds a bit extreme or crazy, but for those with certain phobias it's a really serious situation.

Today, of course, the holiday has become a booming commercial success. According to the Greeting Card Association, 25% of all cards sent each year are valentines.

*I pray that one day we will walk as brothers and sisters
I pray that war will be a thing of the past
That one day we will be able to go anywhere without fear
I pray our leaders look within their hearts
Listen to the wisdom of their souls
I pray that goodness will be rewarded and love will prevail
May we all share the light of You
Amen*

The History of Presidents' Day



So what is Presidents' Day and how did it come about?

The observance of Presidents' Day in the United States is reminiscent of the Indian fable of the blind men and the elephant in the sense that the holiday seems to mean something different to everybody. Presidents' Day dates back to our founding father and first President, George Washington. Washington was born on February 22, 1732 and on his birthday in 1796, when Washington was in his last full year as president, the day became the holiday known as Washington's Birthday.

In looking through the local newspaper, one could easily conclude that the modern holiday was created by merchants, just so they could hold their annual Presidents' Day sales. Depending on your perspective or what part of the country you're from, Presidents' Day is intended to honor George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, or all the American presidents. And for many of us who don't get the day off from work, the holiday seems to pass almost unnoticed.

According to the Gregorian or "New Style" calendar that is in use today, George Washington was born on February 22, 1732, but according to the Julian or "Old Style" calendar that was in effect in England and her colonies until 1752, his birth date was February 11th. (This is because the new calendar added eleven days to the old date to bring the calendar year into step with the astronomical year.) So back in the 1790s, while Washington was still alive, some Americans celebrated his birthday on February 11th and some on February 22nd. However, Americans didn't observe this holiday on February 22nd uniformly until 1832, 100 years after his birth.

Then along came Abraham Lincoln, another famous US president, who was also deserving of a special day of recognition. Born on February 12, 1809, Lincoln's birthday was first celebrated in 1865, the year after he was assassinated. The only problem was that he was born on February 12th and so now we found ourselves with two presidential birthdays that fell within a short time of one another.

Prior to 1968, this fact didn't seem to bother anyone and things were running along pretty smoothly in the birthday celebration department - February 22nd was observed as a *federal* public holiday to honor the birthday of George Washington and February 12th was observed as a *public* holiday (in most states) to honor the birthday of Abraham Lincoln.

Then things changed. In 1968, the 90th Congress was determined to create a uniform system of federal Monday holidays, so they voted to shift three existing holidays (including Washington's Birthday) to Mondays. The law took effect in 1971 when President Richard Nixon combined Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays into Presidents' Day. It would be

celebrated on the **third Monday in February**, regardless of which day it fell on and pays tribute to both Washington and Lincoln, as well as all those who have served as president.

As a result, Washington's Birthday holiday was changed from its fixed February 22 date to the third Monday in February. This change was not without controversy. There was some concern that Washington's identity would be lost (since the third Monday in February would never fall on his birth date of February 22nd). There was also an attempt to rename the public holiday "Presidents' Day", but this stalled in committee. *"It was the collective judgment of the Committee on the Judiciary,"* stated Mr. William Moore McCulloch (R-Ohio) *"that this [naming the day "President's Day"] would be unwise. Certainly, not all Presidents are held in the same high esteem as the Father of our Country. There are many who are not inclined to pay their respects to certain Presidents. Moreover, it is probable that the members of one political party would not relish honoring a President from the other political party whether he was in office, no matter how outstanding history may find his leadership."*

The single holiday observance meant that the traditional 10-day separation between Washington's Birthday (February 22) and Lincoln's Birthday (February 12) had essentially been eliminated. However, while Congress had created a uniform federal holiday law, there was *not* a uniform holiday title agreement among the individual states. Even though most states with individual holidays honoring Washington and Lincoln shifted their state recognition date of Washington's Birthday to correspond to the third Monday in February, some states, including California, Idaho, Tennessee, Texas and others, chose *not* to retain the federal holiday title and renamed their state holiday "President's Day."

From that point forward, the growing use of the term Presidents' Day was largely a marketing phenomenon, as advertisers sought a catchall phrase to capitalize on the opportunity for three-day or weeklong sales. Gradually, the phrase "Presidents' Day" took hold and today has become part of the everyday vernacular. Interestingly, in 1999, bills were introduced in both the U.S. House (HR-1363) and Senate (S-978) to specify that the legal public holiday once referred to as Washington's Birthday be "officially" called by that name once again. Both bills died in committees.

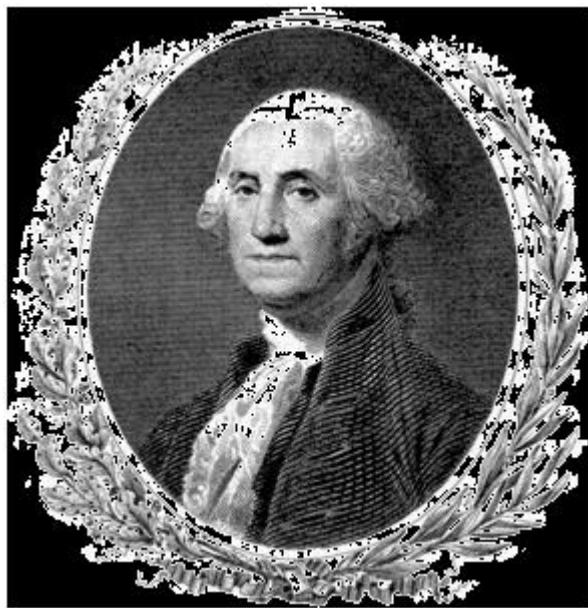
If you are a traditionalist, you'll be happy to know that even though Washington's Birthday and Lincoln's Birthday have been replaced on the federal holiday register with a single day, many communities continue to observe the original holidays by staging pageants and reenactments of important milestones in the lives of Washington and Lincoln. The National Park Service features a number of historic sites and memorials to honor the lives of these two presidents, and therefore it is not surprising to find that many of the birthday observance activities and events are held at many of these locations.

So when did Americans first acknowledge our Presidents with their own day?



Presidential Facts

George Washington: February 22, 1732 - December 14, 1799 at age 67



George Washington, known as "The Father of Our Country", was the first President of the United States of America. He played a major role in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence signed on July 4, 1776, declaring the Colonies to be free and independent states. He fought valiantly in the American Revolution and led the Colonists to Freedom as the Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. He was a wise and courageous man admired for his honesty and strength of character.

Two famous tales told about him are from the book, "The Life and Memorable Actions of George Washington" by Parson Mason Locke Weems. Parson Weems speaks of George tossing a stone across the Rappahannock River. (Later, the stone became a silver dollar in American folk lore.)

He also speaks of his having chopped down a cherry tree and admitting it to his Father, as he could not tell a lie. Whether these stories are fact or fiction is uncertain but, both are favorite stories associated with Washington.



George Washington, a Virginian and plantation owner himself of the estate known as Mount Vernon on the Potomac River, was a methodical man. He gave a great deal of thought to every decision he made. However, once his decision was made he did not waver in his resolve. Valley Forge is a testimonial to that resolve. Valley Forge was a strategic location chosen because it separated the British forces in Philadelphia from the colonist Congress operating in York, Pennsylvania. It was there with a small army of 11,000 men through a freezing Winter with few supplies and many desertions that Washington was able to train his forces, with the help of Baron Frederick Van Steuben. The sheer force

of his belief in the Colonists right to freedom was what pulled him through these, the darkest hours of the American Revolution. Washington went on to win our independence. Lord Cornwallis, leader of the British forces, surrendered on October 19, 1781. It took two more years before a peace treaty was signed in 1783 recognizing the Colonists independence.

Abraham Lincoln: February 12, 1809 - April 12, 1865 Assassinated by the actor, John Wilkes Booth.



Abraham Lincoln was our 16th President and he is known as "The Great Emancipator."

Nicknamed "Honest Abe" for his honesty and fairness and coming from very humble beginnings, Abraham Lincoln is the finest example of what an individual can achieve with hard work and the ambition to learn and to lead. He read constantly and went to great pains to get his hands on any books he could find to further his quest for knowledge. In his youth he walked miles to get to the only school house in his region. He did his homework by the light of the fire and used the back of a shovel to work out his sums, mathematics. His earliest reading material was the family bible and he relied on the truths it offered him and the comfort he derived from them throughout his whole life.

Lincoln took office as 16th President on March 4, 1861. Six weeks later, on April 12, 1861 the Civil War broke out when Fort Sumter was fired upon by the confederacy.

The War would not end until April 9, 1865 when General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. Six days later, on April 15, 1865 the man who had said, "*Slavery is a continual torment to me*" was dead.



Lincoln, known as the Great Emancipator, signed the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862 giving freedom to slaves held in any state in the confederacy that did not return to the Union by the end of the year.

Slavery was not abolished until the 13th Amendment was added to the Constitution on December 18, 1865, after Lincoln's death.

Lincoln had stated when he was a candidate for Senator of Illinois, "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave, half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall-but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other."

He felt the fate of democracy lay in the preservation of the Union.

It is doubtful that a divided America, two separate nations, would have achieved the success and prosperity it has had if the Union had not endured.

"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of Democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference is no Democracy. "



1 Peter 2:13-17 (New International Version, ©2010)

¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority,¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves.¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

When Peter wrote this letter, Nero, the megalomaniac, was the sitting "president" in Rome. It's obvious that Peter lived with more faith in the King of Kings than fear of the madman of madmen. In this light I pray:

*Creator, God of power, thank You for the service of all the U.S.
Presidents, past and present.*

*Bless and keep all people whose lives are touched by the President's
decisions and be, O God, ever present in the President's actions.
Help me do the same and let our earthly authorities know
who is really in charge- You!*

Amen

Other Interesting Presidential Facts

- Only five presidents have ever worn facial hair when they sought the office. The last was over a century ago, in 1889; Benjamin Harrison.
- There have been seven left-handed presidents, including Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Ronald Reagan.
- The first president to smoke a cigar in office was James Madison. In fact, Madison regularly smoked cigars until his death in 1836 at the age of 85. Madison was also the shortest president at five-feet four-inches tall.
- George W. Bush, 43rd president of the United States, and his wife Laura got married just three months after meeting each other.
- 40th president of the United States Ronald Reagan broke the so-called "20-year curse," in which every president elected in a year ending in 0 died in office.
- Military leader and 34th president of the U.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower loved to cook; he developed a recipe for vegetable soup that is 894 words long and includes the stems of nasturtium flowers as one of the ingredients.
- The letter "S" comprises the full middle name of the 33rd president, Harry S. Truman. It represents two of his grandfathers, whose names both had "S" in them.
- 32nd president of the United States Franklin D. Roosevelt was related, either by blood or by marriage, to 11 former presidents.
- Herbert Hoover, 31st U.S. president, published more than 16 books, including one called Fishing for Fun-And to Wash Your Soul.
- Calvin Coolidge, 30th president of the United States, had chronic stomach pain and required 10 to 11 hours of sleep and an afternoon nap every day.

- Warren Harding, 29th U.S. president, played poker at least twice a week, and once gambled away an entire set of White House china. His advisors were nicknamed the "Poker Cabinet" because they joined the president in his poker games.
- William Taft, 27th president of the United States, weighed more than 300 pounds and had a special oversized bathtub installed in the White House.
- The teddy bear derived from 26th U.S. president Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt's refusal to shoot a bear with her cub while on a hunting trip in Mississippi.
- Grover Cleveland, 22nd and 24th president of the United States, underwent a secret operation aboard a yacht to remove his cancerous upper jaw in 1893.
- Both ambidextrous and multilingual, 20th president of the United States James Garfield could write Greek with one hand while writing Latin with the other.
- Ulysses S. Grant, 18th president of the United States, died of throat cancer. During his life, Grant had smoked about 20 cigars per day.
- 17th U.S. president Andrew Johnson never attended school. His future wife, Eliza McCardle, taught him to write at the age of 17. (Bonus fact about Andrew Johnson: He only wore suits that he custom-tailored himself.)
- Often depicted wearing a tall black stovepipe hat, 16th president of the United States Abraham Lincoln carried letters, bills, and notes in his hat.
- 15th U.S. president James Buchanan is the only unmarried man ever to be elected president. Buchanan was engaged to be married once; however, his fiancée died suddenly after breaking off the engagement, and he remained a bachelor all his life.
- Sedated only by brandy, 11th president of the United States James Polk survived gall bladder surgery at the age of 17.
- John Tyler, 10th U.S. president, fathered 15 children (more than any other president)--8 by his first wife, and 7 by his second wife. Tyler was past his seventieth birthday when his 15th child was born.
- 9th U.S. president William Henry Harrison was inaugurated on a bitterly cold day and gave the longest inauguration speech ever. The new president promptly caught a cold that soon developed into pneumonia. Harrison died exactly one month into his presidential term, the shortest in U.S. history.
- In warm weather, 6th president of the United States John Quincy Adams customarily went skinny-dipping in the Potomac River before dawn.

Ok now you have the information behind the two U.S. holidays in February – one a Public holiday and the other a Federal Public holiday.

What's the difference between a Public and a Federal Public holiday? Easy, the Federal (and most city, county and state) governments are closed to business on Federal Public holidays and for the plain ole Public holidays they may not be. Whoopie !!!

"Anybody who has any doubt about the ingenuity or the resourcefulness of a plumber never got a bill from one."

George Meany

"Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

TNT

A 50 something, no longer so urban or in NM, homesteading prepper

TNTCrazyLady
FormerlyNMUrbanHomesteader.weebly.com