



NEWSLETTER



MAY Nº21



May Day



The first day of the month of May is known as May Day. It is the time of year when warmer weather begins and flowers and trees start to blossom. It is said to be a time of love and romance. It is when people celebrate the coming of summer with lots of different customs that are expressions of joy and hope after a long winter. Traditional English May Day celebrations include Morris dancing, crowning a May Queen and dancing around a Maypole, parades...



Maypole Dancing - A traditional dance at this time of year

The beginning of Summer

Although summer does not officially begin until June, May Day marks its beginning. May Day celebrations have been carried out in England for over 2000 years.

The Romans celebrated the festival of Flora, goddess of fruit and flowers, which marked the beginning of summer. It was held annually from April 28th to May 3rd.

May Day in Scotland

"I come from a town in Scotland called Turriff. We celebrate May day on the 1st Monday of May every year. The roads are closed off to traffic from 10am - 4pm, we have a funfair at the local park, we have lots off stalls in the town & different activities & going on throughout the day, the Local pipeband (Turriff & Disrtrict Pipeband) march round the town playing. Its a fantastic day out for all & attracts crowds of people to Turriff."

Veronica

May Day Bank Holiday

The month of May has many traditions and celebrations. For the convenience of the general public, many May Day activities have now been moved to the new May Day holiday (from 1978) on the first Monday of the month. This Monday is a bank holiday, a day off school and work.

Many of the May Day celebrations take place at the weekend as well as on the 'May Day' Monday. The weekend is known as bank holiday weekend because it comes with the extra day holiday on the Monday.

*Are there any special foods for this celebration? No
Is there any special person associated with this holiday? No
Are there special types of clothing for the celebration of May Day? People who are performing dress up. See Morris dancing*



May 1st (May Day) is known worldwide as Labor Day, but in France it is also May Day - *Fête du Muguet* (Lily of the Valley) when the French greet each other with a sprig (or a small bouquet) of lily of the valley, a flower that is considered a lucky charm.

The tradition dates back to the beginning of the century when unemployed people (the unemployment benefits did not exist and people had to find ways of making ends meet) went into the woods that were still found in the big cities' suburbs to pick lilies of the valley.

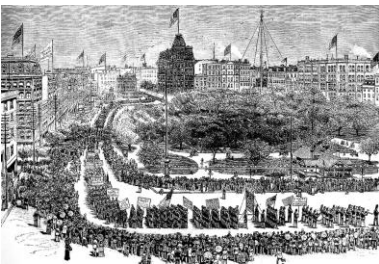
The lily of the valley is in full bloom in late April early May, and is one of those wild plants that spread very quickly, invading clearings and edges of wood! It grows everywhere and is almost considered as a weed. People just needed the patience of picking it and composing small bouquets that they tied with a ribbon.

They sold them in the markets as women once loved to decorate their blouses with a sprig* of lily of the valley, a custom that was a remainder of the old pagan tradition when people were celebrating spring by adorning* themselves with flowers!

In the language of flowers, the lily of the valley symbolizes "marital happiness". It was therefore natural to link it to dating and popular dances known as "*Bals du Muguet*" were organized every year so that singles could meet their soul mate. The girls dressed in white and young men wore a sprig of lily on their lapel,* and parents and chaperones were banned from attending!

The lily of the valley has been cultivated in Europe since the Middle Ages but it is said to originate from Japan where it is considered a symbol of spring. Some sources, however, attest that the Celts knew the flower and that they already considered it as a lucky charm.

The French tradition of giving a sprig of lily of the valley as a good luck charm on May 1st dates from May 1st, 1561 when King Charles IX receives a sprig.



May 1st Labor Day

May 1st is widely known as the international Labor Day when all trade unions parade in the major cities.



After those explanations, let me send you, *in the French way*, some lily of the valley . I wish that each bell brings you, *with its charming perfume*, a lot of happiness, luck.

Happy May 1st.



Or « strand »
Brin

To adorn
ornier,
parer

Revers (de veste)

