

Valentine Traditions

By Lora Vanderhall
Post Staff Writer

Valentine's Day is a day that has been set aside for showing your loved ones you care. During the holiday it is common to see large red hearts, cards, paper lace and cupids everywhere. Children particularly enjoy the holiday because they exchange valentine cards with their classmates and sometimes are allowed to have parties. Some adults also enjoy Valentine's Day just as much as children. I have often wondered who started all of this Valentine sending and who was St. Valentine?

Hundreds of years ago in the days of the Roman festivals to pagan gods, there was a festival called the Lupercalia. Lupercalia is an ancient Roman fertility festival celebrated on February 15. It was the custom at this feast for the young Romans to put into a box the names of young maidens and then draw the names out by chance. The young lady whose name he drew became the young man's partner for the Lupercalia festival.

With the introduction of Christianity the celebration in honor of heathen gods were removed in every way possible. However, the people had become so accustomed to the rituals of their various holidays and festivals that it was impossible to do away with them entirely. In the year A.D. 496, Pope Gelasius of Rome chose a substitute holiday for Christians. The new celebration was to honor a bishop by the name of Valentine who on February 14, around A.D. 270, had been executed on Palatine Hill.

Very little is known about the life of Bishop Valentine. Some historians have claimed that he has been confused with another St. Valentine, who lived during emperor Claudius's time and was imprisoned for marrying couples secretly when the emperor had forbidden the marriages to take place. However, the best authorities identify St. Valentine as the churchman who was beaten and beheaded on February 14 because he had cured his jail-keeper's daughter of blindness.

Valentine's Day originated from the Lupercalia festival therefore many of the customs of the ancient Lupercalia continued. One custom that has not continued in England and Scotland is drawing names from an urn. In Norwich, England, St. Valentine's Day use to be a day for giving gifts. These gifts were baskets that were left at the doorsteps of the recipient. In the town of Norfolk it was the custom for children to catch each other for Valentines. They would say, "Good mornow, Valentinel" and if the speaker could repeat his words before he was given a reply, he was rewarded with a small gift.

In Derbyshire the girls used to look through the keyhole early in the morning of St. Valentine's Day and "if they saw only a single object or person, they would remain unmarried all that year.

However, if they saw two or more objects or persons, they would be sure to have a sweetheart, and that in no distant time; but if fortune so favored them that by chance the saw a rooster and

a hen, they might be certain to be married before the year was out."

There was an old saying that if snowdrops were brought into the house before St. Valentine's

Day the single women of that house would remain unmarried all year! Other superstitions along this line are evident in the following extract from a young lady's diary from 1754:

"Last Friday was Valentine's Day and the night before I got five bay-leaves, and pinned four of them to the four corners of my pillow, and the fifth to the middle; and then if I dreamt of my sweetheart, we should be married before the year is out. But to make it sure, I boiled an egg hard and took out the yolk, and filled it with salt; and when I went to bed ate it, shell and all, without speaking or drinking after it. We also wrote our lovers' name upon bits of paper, and rolled them up in clay, and put them into water; and the first that rose up was to be our valentine."

There was a superstition among rural people that the birds select their mates on St. Valentine's Day.

In some areas of England it is still customary for children to go about on Valentine's Eve singing for pennies, apples, or oranges. Also in some sections of England, it is customary to eat a certain kind of bun made with caraway seeds and currants or plums. In Rutland these buns have been given to the boys and girls of the town on Valentine's Day for hundreds of years.

The Sicilians hold a happy festival on February 14. It is said that a young girl in Sicily should stand at her window for a half hour before the sun rises on the morning of St. Valentine's Day, and if she sees no one pass she will have to remain unmarried that year. But if a man should happen to come within sight of her watching eyes, it means that either he or someone closely resembling him will become her husband, and that within the year!

So much for superstitions. Today our thoughts turn to candy, cards, and Cupid on Valentine's Day.



"What Have You Done For Me Lately?"

With February 14 approaching the question of what have you done for me lately usually determines the type of gift or gesture given at Valentines. Ideally, the gift or gesture should be determined by how much you care about a person and/or how much you can afford. The whole idea is to let those special people know you care.

After deciding that you will do something for that special person on Valentine's Day, the next question is, how much can you afford? The price range can be from 50 cents to several thousand dollars or greater. The sky is the limit! After deciding your price range the next question is

what will it be?

Flowers are still very popular at this time of year. Helen Mungo, owner of University Flowers & Gifts said, "Roses are still the most popular flower with carnations running a close second." The price range for roses is \$45.00-\$60.00 per dozen. If that's a bit expensive for you a single rose says a lot too.

Sometimes, depending on the person, flowers are not the way to go, or maybe you just want to change your gift this year. Some people rationalize that if you have \$50.00 to spend, put it in something that will last forever.

That opens up a large range of



gift ideas, from clothing to cars. Jewelry is a good gift idea for the

jewelry connoisseur. The saying "Diamonds are a girls best friend" has some merit.

Another probe for deciding what that special person would like is to ask yourself, what have they procrastinated about buying lately? Some women would love to have designer clothes or pocketbooks but for whatever reason continue to put it off. I'm sure that would be a welcomed surprise. Buying for men seems to be a little more difficult but by no means an excuse for not buying. Men are increasingly becoming involved with the designer thing too. Anything from designer clothes to wallets are some of the things they seem to

enjoy but procrastinate about buying. A subscription to his favorite NBA or NFL newspaper would also be a good gift idea.

Some novelty items this year are dinosaurs and devil stuffed animals. They come in different sizes and can be incorporated into flower arrangements. Balloon-a-grams and certificates stating how much you care are still very popular.

Ultimately, it is the thought that counts. A special dinner for two or an offer to do the dishes for a change may make your valentine very happy. You may not be able to afford a gift per se but you can always give a kind gesture.

FDY Restaurant Offers Tastefully Delicious Food

By Lora Vanderhall
Post Staff Writer

FDY is Charlotte's newest a la carte style restaurant. FDY opened on January 25th of this year and it is owned by Floyd D. Young.

Mr. Young's expertise in the food industry spans over 30 years. When he moved to Charlotte in 1969 he served as food service director for a company that served Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, Livingstone College in Salisbury, Barber-Scotia College in Concord and Denmark Technical College in Denmark, S.C.

In 1983, Young formed FDY, Inc. when he took over the contracts of the above Carolina colleges. The services the company offers includes industrial feedings, catering, institutional feedings, vending operations and most recently a restaurant/banquet facility.

FDY restaurant is located in 77 Coporate Park at I-77 and Clanton Road. The 11,124-square foot facility will seat 375 people and can accommodate 500 people. The restaurant is open for lunch Monday thru Friday, 11:15 until 1:45. The facility will also help serve FDY's in-

creasing banquet clientele, Young says.

The restaurant offers a variety of USDA choice meats including beef, pork, fish, lamb, and veal. Fresh fruits and vegetables are of the highest possible quality and delivered daily. The cafeteria style restaurant also offers an open salad bar, assorted fruits and juices, a variety of desserts including hard and soft serve ice cream and a grill.

The staff at FDY has grown from 75 to 200 employees since its founding in 1983. The company's commitment to quality service at fair prices has been the primary reason for its success. Their motto is "Exceptionally prepared, Tastefully delicious..." "We have a variety of food that will meet all of the public's palate," said Mr. Young.

In observance of Black History Month FDY and The Charlotte Post will host a drop-in Friday, February 12th at FDY, Inc. Everyone is invited to come out and enjoy free hors d'oeuvres and music from 5-9 p.m. FDY is located at 3411-K St. Vardell Lane (off of I-77 South and Clanton Rd).



FDY executive staff pictured left to right Keith Haywood, Floyd D. Young, Norma Young, Ezell Armstrong, Brenda Brown, Tom Young, and Ron Goodwin.



Photos By Calvin Ferguson

MY COMPLIMENTS TO THE CHEF.....

Julius Hart serves up mouth watering pies at the new FDY Restaurant but of course that is not the extent of his culinary skills. Like the entire professionally trained FDY staff, Hart aims to please.