



Merewether Historical Society

"A society aimed at recording memories of the past for the benefit of the next generation."

Telephone: 0412 925 918

Email: secretary@merewetherhistorical.com

Website: www.merewetherhistorical.com

The Chronicle

February 2023

Meetings: Next meeting will be held at Merewether Bowling Club Caldwell St on **Tuesday 14 February**, 10.30 for a 10.45 start. Hope to see you there. Changes to our Constitution will be voted on, as per details in the December Chronicle

Guest Speaker Greg Nelmes will talk on the History of South Newcastle Hockey Club

Birthday Wishes Many happy returns to Monica Jordan, Janette Knowles, Joan Salmon, Maureen Wright and Sharon Nevile as well as to all other members who celebrate in February. Hope your birthdays are full of joy.



Bus Trip: Tuesday 21 March will see us travel to Dobell House Wangi Wangi for morning tea and a tour, and then to the Royal Motor Yacht Club in Toronto for lunch. Unfortunately, we have had to raise the cost to \$75 to cover increased bus hire and venue charges.



Given that our next meeting falls on February 14th which is the day **Valentine's Day**, also called **Saint Valentine's Day** or the **Feast of Saint Valentine**, here is a short history of the event. Today lovers express their affection with greetings and gifts but given their similarities, it has been suggested that the holiday has origins in the Roman festival of Lupercalia, held in mid-February. The festival, which celebrated the coming of spring, included fertility rites and the pairing off of women with men by lottery. At the end of the 5th century, Pope Gelasius I forbade the celebration of Lupercalia and is sometimes attributed with replacing it with St. Valentine's Day, but the true origin of the holiday is vague at best. By this time Rome had become Christian and the Catholic Church was determined to stamp out any remaining paganism.

The poet Chaucer in the Middle Ages was the first to link St Valentine with romantic love. This was the beginning of the tradition of courtly love, a ritual of expressing love and admiration, usually in secret. This custom spread throughout Europe and stories grew about a High Court of Love where female judges would rule on issues related to love on 14 February each year. Historians believe that these meetings were in fact gatherings where people read love poetry and played games of flirtation.



Valentine's Day did not come to be celebrated as a day of romance until about the 14th century.

Although there were several Christian martyrs named Valentine, the day may have taken its name from a priest who was martyred about 270 CE by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus. According to legend, the priest signed a letter "from your Valentine" to his jailer's daughter, whom he had befriended and, by some accounts, healed from blindness. Other accounts hold that it was St. Valentine of Terni, a bishop, for whom the holiday was named, though it is possible the two saints were actually one person. Another common legend states that St. Valentine defied the emperor's orders and secretly married couples to spare the husbands from war. It is for this reason that his feast day is associated with love.



Formal messages, or valentines, appeared in the 1500s, and by the late 1700s commercially printed cards were being used.. Valentines commonly depict Cupid, the Roman god of love, along with hearts, traditionally the seat of emotion. Traditional gifts include chocolates and flowers, particularly red roses, a symbol of beauty and love.

The day is popular in the United States as well as in Britain, Canada, and Australia, and it is also celebrated in other countries, including Argentina, France, Mexico, and South Korea. In the Philippines it is the most common wedding anniversary, and mass weddings of hundreds of couples are not uncommon on that date. The holiday has expanded to expressions of affection among relatives and friends. Many schoolchildren exchange valentines with one another on this day.



While Valentine's Day is celebrated in most countries, different cultures have developed their own traditions for this festival. In some parts of the world Valentine's Day is observed as a day for expressing love between family members and friends, rather than that of romantic couples. Some traditions include leaving lollies and gifts for children and others include acts of appreciation between friends.

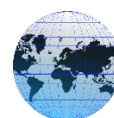
Valentine's Day is most commonly associated with romantic love, with millions of Valentine's Day cards being exchanged each year. Gifts of flowers or a single red rose are sent with romantic messages to loved ones and couples spend special time together.

Many couples choose to celebrate Valentine's Day with dinner, a picnic or special home-cooked meal. Many restaurants offer Valentine's Day dinner promotions and food is often presented with symbols of love like hearts and flowers. Marriage proposals are also popular on Valentine's Day, and it is often chosen as the perfect day to express their love and commitment.



Valentine's Day | Definition, History, & Traditions | Britannica

Point to Ponder: The world is round, and the place which may seem like the end may also be the beginning! *Ivy Baker Priest*



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