

May Day Tradition



The Victorians celebrated the month of May with joy as it signaled the end of winter and the dawn of spring. One English tradition that originated long ago was the Maypole. A large birch branch was set up on the common green. Children grabbed a multi-colored ribbon attached to the top and performed a merry dance around the pole.

Another custom was the delivery of May baskets. Children rose early on May 1st to gather wildflowers. They fashioned them into garlands or placed them in small baskets and secretly delivered them to friends and family.



My mother remembers honoring this custom as a child. She and her sister and brothers would form paper cones and fill them with flowers. Ribbons might be tied to the top of the paper cone to hang it on a doorknob. An early morning delivery of flowers was a pleasant surprise for the recipient, who was usually their mother.



Consider celebrating spring this year with a May Basket. Have children make paper cones or decorate berry baskets. Fill them with fresh flowers and attach a note of greetings or encouragement. Since it's not a common practice, you might need to write a sentence to explain the reason for the flowers. You can find directions to make these May Basket examples shown here at:

<http://www.kidsdomain.com/craft/maybasket1.html>

<http://www.kidsdomain.com/craft/maybasket5.html>

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