

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOTHER'S DAY

From Ancient Egypt to Modern Day

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LIQUID GREEN PRODUCTS



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Chapter 1

Ancient Egypt



Ancient Egyptian Roots

In Egypt, Mother's Day is celebrated on March 21. The day, however, has a long history that goes back to Ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egyptians held an annual festival to honor Isis, one of the most popular and enduring goddesses of ancient Egypt who represented the ideal mother and wife and was the patroness of nature and magic. According to ancient Egyptian mythology, Isis was the wife of Osiris, who was also her brother.

When Osiris was murdered by their envious brother Set, Isis gathered Osiris's body parts that had been scattered around Egypt and used them to impregnate herself. She then gave birth to Horus, who avenged his father's death and killed Set, becoming the first ruler of Egypt. As a result, Isis was regarded as the mother of all pharaohs and became symbolic of motherhood, and an annual festival was held in her honor.



Isis breastfeeding her son, Horus. *Credit: Google Images*

Isis was first depicted with an empty throne on her head, personifying the power behind the Pharaoh. Later, she was represented with the horns of a cow on her head, with the solar disk between them or as a winged goddess -- a signifier of both her protectiveness and ability to fan renewed life into the dead. By the New Kingdom, some depictions of Isis showed her breastfeeding her son, Horus.

The religion of Isis was introduced to the Hellenistic world by the ruler Ptolemy I Soter as a means to unify the Greeks and Egyptians in his kingdom which spread across modern day Egypt. In the Greco-Roman culture, Isis was associated with goddesses Demeter, Astarte and Aphrodite which furthered her symbolic ties with fertility and femininity.

Chapter 2

Journalist Mustafa Amin - The Father of Mother's Day



Isis as the winged goddess, protector, and life giver. Google images

In modern times, the celebration of Mother's Day was reintroduced by journalist Mustafa Amin, who first wrote about it in his 1943 book "*Smiling America*." The idea, however, did not gain traction at the time. Ten years later, a woman visited Amin's brother, Ali, and told him all about the hardships she faced as a single mother after her husband passed away.

She recounted how she dedicated every aspect of her life to her children, however, they abandoned her after they graduated university and started families of their own.

This story inspired Ali to bring back his brother's idea and wrote about the importance of recognizing mothers and their sacrifices.

"Why don't we choose a day of the year to be 'Mother's Day' where we celebrate in our country [Egypt] and other eastern countries," he wrote.

Shortly after, the idea started gaining popularity among people. In 1957, *Akhbar el-Yom* newspaper's March 9 front page paid tribute to mothers in honor of Mother's Day, which they wrote will be on March 21. This was widely received by readers and 1957 marks the first year the day was celebrated in modern Egypt.

It's believed that March 21 was selected since it's the first day of spring and symbolizes new beginnings.



Chapter 3

From Divine to Secular

The clearest modern precedent for Mother's Day is the early Christian festival known as "Mothering Sunday," the fourth Sunday of Lent, observed in the European Christian tradition since the 1600s.

It was originally seen as a time when the faithful would return to their "mother church"—the main church in the vicinity of their home—for a special service.



Eventually, celebrations of motherhood transitioned away from divine representations and toward the individuals themselves.

In the United Kingdom, Mothering Sundays slowly became a secular tradition where working people could take time off to go home and visit their mothers.

Children would present their mothers with flowers and other tokens of appreciation. This custom eventually faded in popularity before merging with the American Mother's Day in the 1930s and 1940s

Chapter 4

The Origins of Mother's Day in the United States

Ann Reeves Jarvis and Julia Ward Howe

The origins of Mother's Day as celebrated in the United States date back to the 19th century. In the years before the Civil War, Ann Reeves Jarvis of West Virginia helped start "Mothers' Day Work Clubs" to teach local women how to properly care for their children.

These clubs later became a unifying force in a region of the country still divided over the Civil War. In 1868 Jarvis organized "Mothers' Friendship Day," at which mothers gathered with former Union and Confederate soldiers to promote reconciliation.



Ann Reeves Jarvis



Anna Jarvis



Julia Ward Howe

Another precursor to Mother's Day came from the abolitionist and suffragette Julia Ward Howe. In 1870 Howe wrote the "Mother's Day Proclamation," a call to action that asked mothers to unite in promoting world peace. In 1873 Howe campaigned for a "Mother's Peace Day" to be celebrated every June 2.

Other early Mother's Day pioneers include Juliet Calhoun Blakely, Michigan, in the 1870s. The duo of Mary Towles Sasseen and Frank Hering, meanwhile, both worked to organize a Mothers' Day in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some have even called Hering "the father of Mothers' Day," a temperance activist who inspired a local Mother's Day in Albion,

Anna Jarvis Turns Mother's Day into a National Holiday

The official Mother's Day holiday arose in the 1900s because of the efforts of Anna Jarvis, daughter of Ann Reeves Jarvis. Following her mother's 1905 death, Anna Jarvis conceived of Mother's Day as a way of honoring the sacrifices mothers made for their children.

After gaining financial backing from a Philadelphia department store owner named John Wanamaker, in May 1908 she organized the first official Mother's Day celebration at a Methodist church in Grafton, West Virginia. That same day also saw thousands of people attend a Mother's Day event at one of Wanamaker's retail stores in Philadelphia.

Following the success of her first Mother's Day, Jarvis—who remained unmarried and childless her whole life—resolved to see her holiday added to the national calendar. Arguing that American holidays were biased toward male achievements, she started a massive letter writing campaign to newspapers and prominent politicians urging the adoption of a special day honoring motherhood.

By 1912 many states, towns and churches had adopted Mother's Day as an annual holiday, and Jarvis had established the Mother's Day International Association to help promote her cause. Her persistence paid off in 1914 when President Woodrow Wilson signed a measure officially establishing the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

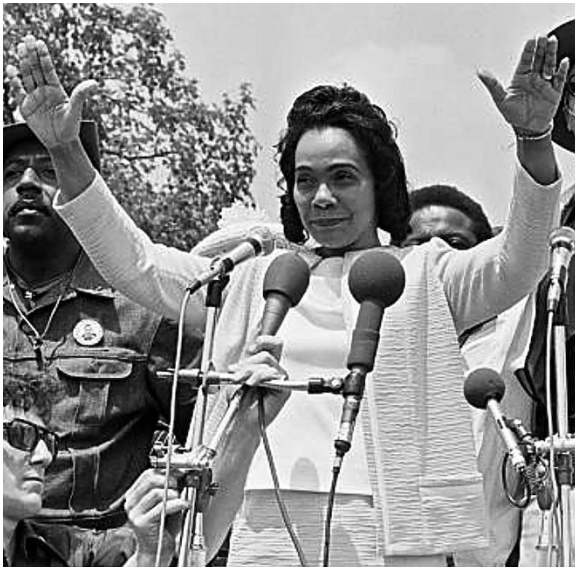
Jarvis Decries the Commercialization of Mother's Day

Anna Jarvis had originally conceived of Mother's Day as a day of personal celebration between mothers and families. Her version of the day involved wearing a white carnation as a badge and visiting one's mother or attending church services. But once Mother's Day became a national holiday, it was not long before florists, card companies and other merchants capitalized on its popularity.

While Jarvis had initially worked with the floral industry to help raise Mother's Day's profile, by 1920 she had become disgusted with how the holiday had been commercialized. She outwardly denounced the transformation and urged people to stop buying Mother's Day flowers, cards and candies.

Jarvis eventually resorted to an open campaign against Mother's Day profiteers, speaking out against confectioners, florists and even charities. She also launched countless lawsuits against groups that had used the name "Mother's Day," eventually spending most of her personal wealth in legal fees. By the time of her death in 1948 Jarvis had disowned the holiday altogether, and even actively lobbied the government to see it removed from the American calendar.

Political Causes



At times, Mother's Day has also been a date for launching political or feminist causes. In 1968 Coretta Scott King, wife of Martin Luther King, Jr., used Mother's Day to host a march in support of underprivileged women and children. In the 1970s women's groups also used the holiday as a time to highlight the need for equal rights and access to childcare.

Chapter 5

A Day to Honour Women Who Nurture.

“All mothers think their children are oaks, but the world never lacks for cabbages” said Robertson Davies (a famous Canadian author). For a mother, her child remains the best and vice-versa. Mothers are respected, loved and appreciated universally for the sacrifices they make during their lifetime.



Mother’s Day is observed on the second Sunday of May each year. It is considered as the most popular festival of the year. On this special day, children pay tribute to their mothers and show gratitude for their constant support. They also greet grandmothers and motherly figures in their lives.

Canada’s First Mother’s Day

The first Mother’s Day was celebrated in 1908. The celebrations of Mother’s Day in Canada originated from its neighboring country, the United States. Both countries have a common popular carnation Mother’s Day symbol. On this occasion, some people like to wear a carnation. They wear this carnation as a brooch on Mother’s Day.

Ways to celebrate Mother's Day in Canada

In Canada, Mother's Day is not declared a federal holiday. Schools and government organizations remain closed as the event falls on Sunday every year. Malls and restaurants are over-crowded with people. The occasion has been commercialized to a large extent. They give cards and flowers to express their love on this occasion.

Children give beautiful cards written with personalized messages. Hence, the sale of greeting cards flips the record on this special occasion. To give a break from kitchen, children take their mothers out for dinner or cook special recipes. Mothers in Canada are pampered with flowers, delicious cakes, personalized handmade gifts and cards. Carnations are considered as a popular symbol in both Canada and USA. People gift chocolates, jewelry, clothes, family albums and handmade items to express their love and gratitude for mothers. Children staying away from their mothers visit their homes to make them feel special on this day. It is also the day that most phone calls are made.



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