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Mother's Day History



Mother's Day began as a spring festival to celebrate "Mother Earth". Then, it became a celebration of "Mother Church". Finally, it became a day to celebrate all mothers. As Christianity spread throughout Europe, the celebration became linked to Easter. Many churches celebrated "Mothering Sunday" on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the forty days leading up to Easter.

Today, Mother's Day is a celebration of all mothers. This idea began with two women—Julia Ward Howe and Anna Jarvis. Howe, a social reformer and poet, wanted a day when mothers could celebrate peace, and, in 1907, Anna Jarvis persuaded her mother's church in Grafton, West Virginia, to celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May, which coincided with the anniversary of her mother's death.

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson made the official announcement, proclaiming Mother's Day as a national holiday to be celebrated on the second Sunday in May.

May Day History

By May 1, the cold and dark of winter has disappeared, and it is springtime in the northern hemisphere. That means flowers in bloom and spring planting in Great Britain, where May Day originated. The holiday, in various forms, spread to Europe and much later, to North America.

The holiday goes back to ancient times and is a yearly ritual to celebrate the bounty of spring. Typical festivities include flowers, dancing, and maypoles, which are tall poles decorated with ribbons and flowers erected for revelers to dance around. Traditionally, wreaths of posies adorn heads and bouquets are quietly left on the doorsteps of neighbors and friends as gestures of friendship.

Famous May Birthdays

- Dwayne Johnson (actor) – May 2, 1972
- James Brown (singer) – May 3, 1933
- Audrey Hepburn (actress) – May 4, 1929
- Tammy Wynette (singer) – May 5, 1942
- Orson Welles (filmmaker) – May 6, 1915
- Don Rickles (comedian) – May 8, 1926
- Rosario Dawson (actress) – May 9, 1979
- Natasha Richardson (actress) – May 11, 1963
- Florence Nightingale (nurse) – May 12, 1820
- Katharine Hepburn (actress) – May 12, 1907
- Perry Como (entertainer) – May 18, 1912
- Jimmy Stewart (actor) – May 20, 1908
- Stevie Nicks (singer) – May 26, 1948
- Clint Eastwood (actor) – May 31, 1930

Cinco de Mayo History



The fifth of May is when Americans celebrate an important battle in Mexican history. While Cinco de Mayo is often thought of as a celebration of Mexican independence, it is not.

Mexican independence, also called the Cry of Dolores, is celebrated on September 16 and occurred about 50 years before the Battle of Puebla. After the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) and the Mexican Reform War (1858–1861), the Mexican government was almost bankrupt. In 1861, Mexican President Benito Juárez issued a two-year moratorium on payment of foreign debt. Mexico's largest creditors—Spain, England, and France—sent ships to the port of Veracruz to demand payment. Mexico negotiated with England and Spain, and their ships went home.

However, French Emperor Napoleon III decided to leverage this opportunity to increase French power in the New World. Napoleon III sent a heavily armed fleet to Veracruz and forced President Juárez and his government into retreat. The French force of more than 8,000 pushed on from Veracruz toward Mexico City, with their troops more than double that of Mexico's. Napoleon expected an easy win and to easily overthrow Juárez.

To his dismay, this was not the case. Even with only 4,500 troops, the Mexican army, led by Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín, was able to defeat the much bigger, better armed, and better trained French force. At Puebla, a mere 70 miles from Mexico City, the French waved the white flag. Four days later, in a frenzy of patriotism, a holiday was declared.

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