

## Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser

If our old brick farmhouse could talk, I'm sure it would have many tales to tell.

It was built in 1813 when Napoleon Bonaparte ruled France and America was at war with Great Britain. The two story house with a belfry was an elegant house for its time. The corner cupboard with intricately carved lines and butterfly shelves was a masterpiece. A fireplace in the opposite corner of the room also has dentil work.

At one time a bake oven was part of the house but later a large walk-in fireplace with a squirrel-back oven was built as part of the summerhouse. The original "box-locks" remain on all of the doors and most of the windows have bubbles as they are handblown.

The first settlers built a log house in the meadow about 1734. As the farm is surrounded by the

Conestoga River, I would suppose they had an abundant supply of fish. Because this area was flooded from time to time, the next house was built on higher ground.

At one time a porch was on two sides of the house and a story is told of a suitor who rode his horse on the porch to gain his sweetheart's attention. Another story says that one door is split down the middle because a drunken man pounded and kicked on it. Because the first owners were Tories their neighbors were suspicious of them and so it is said, they buried their gold in a nearby field — but where?

Within its walls have been all of life—birth and death, joy and sorrow, hard work and play. Now we add our bit of life to the story.

## Saying It With Flowers

Long before there was a Valentine's Day, people linked the beauty and fragrance of flowers with ideas of love and romance. The Greeks and Romans had a love story for almost every kind of flower. When Cupid carried a jar of nectar to a council of gods on Mount Olympus, he spilled the nectar, which bubbled up from the earth in the form of roses. The daisy had once been a lovely forest nymph who had sunk into the earth to outwit the pursuits of Vertumnus, the god of spring. Throughout the years, various meanings have been ascribed to flowers, creating a silent language used to convey one's sentiments to others.

Red and pink are customarily the colors to express love and deep affection on Valentine's Day. Of all the flowers, the red rose declares the intensity of love the giver has for the receiver. Red and white roses together signify unity in a relationship.

Although Valentine's Day is a special time for sweethearts, it is also a day to express fond affection for friends and special relatives as well. Flowers other than roses can imply loyalty, innocence, admiration, happiness, and a friendly way to simply say, "You're my buddy." Green

foliage added to a bouquet represents hope and the promise of fulfillment. Because California's 560 flower growers produce an abundant variety of flowers in numerous colors, you can express your sentiments through flowers and foliage all year round:

**Carnation:** Fascination; I'll never forget you (pink); admiration (red); yes (solid); no, sorry I can't be with you (striped).

**Chrysanthemum:** You're a wonderful friend; cheerfulness; truth; I love you (red).

**Daisy:** Innocence; loyal love.

**Gardenia:** You're lovely; secret love.

**Orchid:** Beauty, refinement; Chinese symbol for many children.

**Rose:** I love you (red); perfect happiness (pink); unity (red and white together); purity and innocence (white); friendship (yellow).

**Snapdragon:** Gracious lady.

**Stephanotis:** Happiness in marriage; desire to travel.

**Tulip:** Perfect lover; declaration of love (red); hopeless love (yellow).

**Fern:** Magic; fascination; secret bond of love (maidenhair fern).

**Ivy:** Fidelity; friendship; affection.

**Myrtle:** Love; Hebrew emblem of marriage.

### Four Steps To Longer Lasting Bouquets

No matter how it's said, you can keep your floral message lasting longer with four easy steps suggested by the California Cut Flower Commission:

1. Use clean vases or containers.

2. Remove all leaves which will be under water in the vase. Submerged leaves will decay and create bacteria, shortening the life of your bouquet.

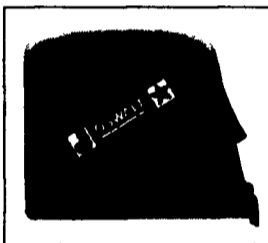
3. Recut the stems of each flower under running water using a sharp knife. This prevents air pockets from forming which blocks water uptake to the flowers. Recut stems every three days.

4. Add floral preservative, obtainable from your florist, to the vase water. Use the recommended amount for the size of your bouquet.



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