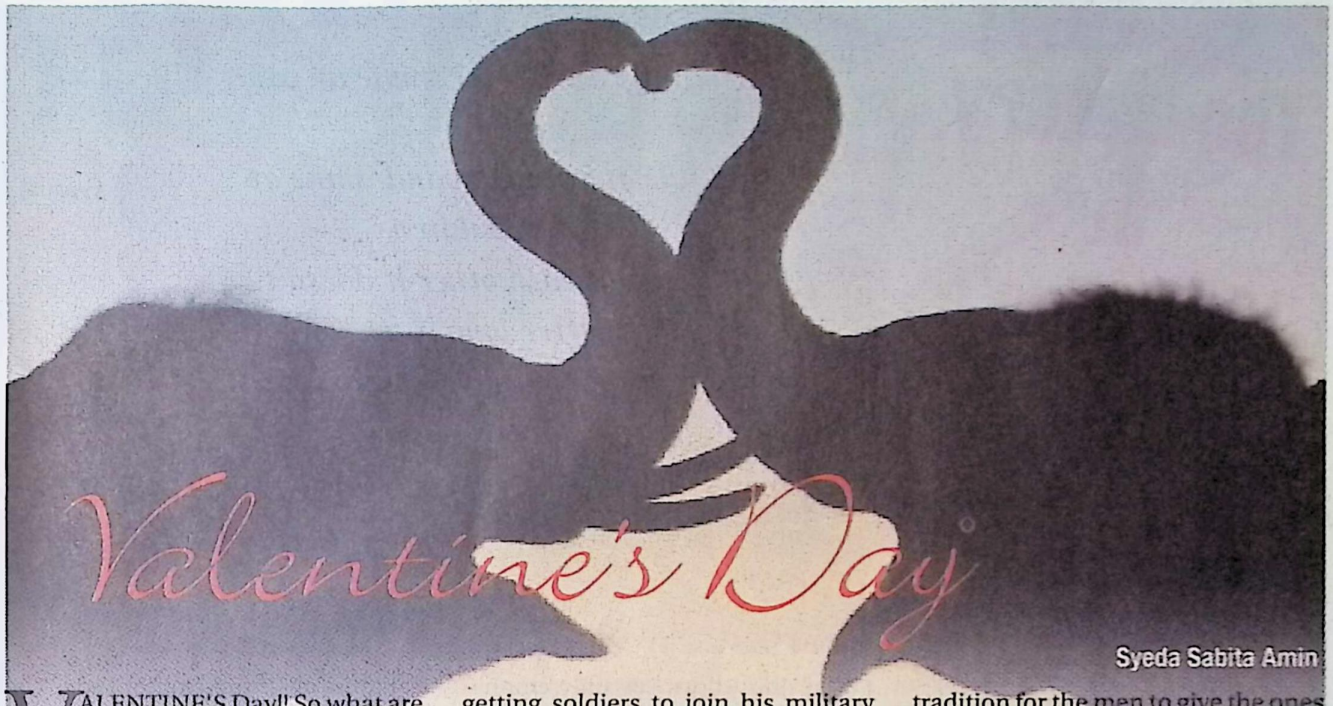


Valentine's Day

Syeda Sabita Amin

VALENTINE'S Day!! So what are you doing for that special someone in your life? Have you been struck by cupid? Now hold on a minute! This day isn't only restricted to 'lovers'. Instead it's actually a day where you celebrate your loved ones and therefore it includes everybody. But where and when did it all begin? I know most of you hate history but its fun to know how it all began. (P.S. you can also show off your wits to others and maybe even impress someone you're trying to make 'that special someone' *wink wink*)

There are varying opinions as to the origin of Valentine's Day. Some experts state that it originated from St. Valentine, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D., the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine".

Another theory is that under the rule of Emperor Claudius II Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February. At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honor of a heathen god. On these occasions, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed. (Now we pretty much have Hallmark! - Aren't you glad.) Although the lottery for women had been banned by the church, the mid-February holiday in commemoration of St. Valentine was still used by Roman men to seek the affection of women. It became a tradition for the men to give the ones they admired handwritten messages of affection, containing Valentine's name

Valentine's Day is celebrated all around the world in different ways. After asking many people, most people suggest Valentine's Day got to Bangladesh through Ershad. Others suggest that it was brought during the colonial period but was only celebrated among the English since the people weren't aware of such customs in their culture, especially around Muslims. (It might be wrong but that's what most people said on enquiry.)

Everything set aside; YOU should do something for someone you love. Again it can be your parents, siblings, friends ANYBODY as long as you love them. Love is an emotion that shouldn't be left unexpressed.

Did you know! - The first Valentine card grew out of this practice. The first true Valentine card was sent in 1415 by Charles, duke of Orleans, to his wife. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London at the time.

Also! - Florists, gift and card shops earn the most on this day from high sales. (Hint hint flowers ;)

Happy Valentine's Day everybody!