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and women, and you get an idea what the folks looked like back then. I own a couple of shirts embroidered with roses and nose­gays and bachelor buttons, and those are only the men's shirts. The women's top looks fit for a Goddess, and all the girls wore those on holidays, red roses and yellow wheat and blue morning glories. Their headdress was usually the parta, a crescent decorated with pearls and shining beads, with long streaming red ribbons cascading down the back. Today would be a good day to dress up really col­orfully! Go shop for summer clothes!

*April 30*

BELTAIN (CELTIC)

This festival of witches—known as Beltain or Beltane (Celtic), May Eve (Central Euro­pean), or Walpurgisnacht (Germany)—has a lot of tradition behind it. This is a festival where the power and sacredness of sexuality is celebrated. Listen to the dark on this night: You can hear the cats in heat howling: if you own a bitch in heat, the dogs will be scratch­ing on your door. During the day, butterflies locked in coitus fly through your garden: insects buzz in the grass with orgiastic excite­

ment. Mother Nature is regenerating her chil­dren, and everything is horny.

The followers of the Old Religion, the witches, met on mountaintops, and danced the spiral dance. Pagan priestesses and other women mated with pagan priests and men. It was a very effective anti-loneliness custom. You knew if you attended the Walpurgisnacht (Walpurgis Night) you would get laid. Babies that resulted from these parties were called sons and daughters of Pan, or Cernunnos, since all men represented him.

Today, when we fear sexually transmit­table diseases, this old custom is no longer viable. We have lost the wildness and the innocence our ancestors possessed; we have become soft and ridden with disease. What was achieved by the ancients' revelry? They believed that the good earth—Walpurg/Demeter/Gaia—appreciated the sexual en­ergy expended in her open fields and that it stimulated the fertility of the crops and ani­mals as well as the vitality of the community.

*April 30*

YAKIMA TRIBE ROOT FESTIVAL (NATIVE AMERICAN)

The first appearance in spring of rooted plants used by the Pacific Northwest Native Americans called for a celebration. In the late spring and summer, several varieties of roots and plants were dried and used in soups, porridge, and for bread.

7. May Day

*Good morning, Mistress and Master,*

*I wish you a happy day;*

*Please to smell my garland*

*Cause it is the first of May.*

*A branch of May I have brought you*

*And at your door I stand;*

*It is but a sprout, but it's well budded out*

*The work of our Lord's hand.*

May day was in ancient tradition the celebration of the beginning of summer or Beltane in Celtic lands, and by Roman tradition sacred to Flora, the goddess of Spring. The May queen is still representative of Flora, or Persephone her Greek counterpart. In Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale" there is a scene where the young heroine takes on the role of Flora, speaking of her native flowers:

"... daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares and take

The winds of March with beauty: violets, dim,

But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes.

Or Cytherea's breath: pale primroses. ... bold oxlips, and

The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,

The flower-de-luce being one."

If the wreath of flowers goes back to Spring goddess symbols, the Maypole itself represents, most probably, the tree of life and fertility. In the modern context both are just good. festive fun, and a reminder that

warmer days are ahead.
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• There are country districts where the young maidens rise early on May Day and wash their faces in the dew. In some areas it is thought that this will ensure a beautiful complexion for the rest of the year and in others it is believed that if a girl washes her face in the morning dew she will marry the first man she meets thereafter. Children may not get the chance at school today to enjoy the tradition oaf a May Pole with flowers on the top and pretty ribbons dangling from it and the very simple skipping dances which can be done around it, either to the accompaniment of music or singing. But they can enjoy making little May Poles.

Use the inside cardboard rolls of some foil or cling wrap and paint it with bright colors. Then take long strips of crepe paper in various colors and glue these into one end. When it is dry you can decorate the top of the pole with a flower.

 Children and adults have traditionally worn flowers when dancing around the May Pole. A single blossom in the buttonhole or hair, or an actual ‘May Crown’ or wreath of flowers for the head, symbolizes the full arrival of spring and new growth.

*"Where are you going to, my pretty maid Where are you going to, my pretty maid?"*

*"May I go with you my pretty maid,*

*May I go with you my pretty maid?"*

*"Indeed you may, kind Sit," she said,*

*"Sir", she said, "Sir", she said,*

*"And it's dabbling in the dew that makes milkmaids fair".*

 *'I'm going a-milking, Sir'; she said,*

*"Sir" she said, "Sir" she said,*

*"I'm going a-milking, Sir", she said.*

May Day Baskets

When we were children, we had a custom of making May Day baskets for our neighbors and friends, and leaving them at their doors in secret early. in the morning. This would give them a surprise on opening their doors!

May Day Cake

Make a Victoria Sponge Cake and use a lemon butter cream icing in the middle with a lemon soft royal icing over the whole of the outside. Alter­natively, have the inside filled with jam and whipped cream and the whole cake covered with lemon soft royal icing.

*`Now we go Round the Maypole High':* Song

(Sung to the tune of *'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush)*

*Now we go round the Maypole high,
Maypole high, Maypole high,*

*Now we go round the Maypole high,
Let colored ribbons fly.*

*See lasses and lads go tripping by,
Tripping by, tripping by,*

*See lasses and lads go tripping by
Let colored ribbons fly.*

*In rainbow hues make garlands gay,
Garlands gay, garlands gay,*

*In rainbow hues make garlands gay,
Let colored ribbons fly.*

*Let colored ribbons fly.*

*Monvenna Bucknell*

*The Lark in the Morn —* Folk Song

*As I was a walking*

*One morning in the Spring*

*I met a pretty maiden*

*So sweetly she did sing.*

*And as we were a-walking*

*These words she did say,*

*`There's no life like the ploughboy's*

*All in the month of May.'*

*The Lark in the morn*

*She doth rise up from her nest,*

*And mounts upon the air*

*With the dew all on her breast.*

*And like the pretty ploughboy*

*She doth whistle and doth sing,*

*And at night she doth return*

*To her own nest back again.*

`May Day' from

*`Lark Rise to Candleford'*

`On the last morning of April the children would come to school with bunches, baskets, arms and pinafores full of flowers — every blossom they could find in the fields and hedges or beg from parents and neighbors. On the previous Sunday some of the bigger boys would have walked six or eight miles to a distant wood where primroses grew. These. with violets from the hedgerows, cowslips from the meadows, and wallflowers, oxlips, and sprays of pale red flowering currant from the cottage gardens formed the main supply. A sweetbriar hedge in the schoolmistress's garden furnished unlimited greenery.

Piled on desks, table, and floor, this supply appeared inexhaustible; but the garland was large,

and as the work of dressing it proceeded, it became plain that the present stock wouldn't 'hardly go nowheres', as the children said. So foraging parties were sent out, one to the Rectory, another to Squire's, and others to outlying farm-houses and cottages. All returned loaded, for even the most miserly and garden-proud gave liberally to the garland. In time the wooden frame was covered, even if there had to be solid greenery to fill up at the back, out of sight. Then the 'Top-Knot', consisting of a bunch of crown imperial, yellow and brown, was added to crown the whole, and the fragrant, bowery structure was sprinkled with water and set aside for the night.'

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